

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—*Goethe.*

'WHATSOEVER DOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.'—*Paul.*

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

'The Literary Guide' is still guiding, and still straight to our doors: in opposition, it is true, but then the moth always seems to be fighting the light; and yet is all the time attracted by it. We see a number occasionally, when some observant correspondent is mindful of us: and the latest number we received was really acceptable. The little 'Guide' points us out three times in this number. Once, in a review of Dr. Viollet's 'Spiritists and Insanity': once in an article on 'Mysticism and the Reputed Reaction from Naturalism': and once in a rollicking suggestion for an 'Anti-Spook League.'

In the first, it is admitted that Dr. Viollet 'does not venture to deny the validity of Spiritualism,' but appeals to Spiritualists 'to keep feeble-minded persons out of their community.' No fear! The feeble-minded people do not venture. In the second, we have a summary of a lecture on the subject by the Catholic priest, R. H. Benson, in which he upheld the validity of the phenomena but attributed them to devils. In the third, we have the suggestion of a big moth very much on the rampage round the light. The writer does not, of course, believe, but he hotly invites offers from persons who want to inquire with a view to prove a negative: and he calls himself a rationalist!

We have recently come across a remarkable pamphlet by John Haynes Holmes on 'The Proof of Immortality' (Essex Hall, Essex-street, London). Fully granting that a Future Life cannot be demonstrated as the chemist can demonstrate his experiments, Mr. Holmes falls back upon the value of inference: and, just as we infer the Ether from what we know of its necessity, and Ions and Corpuscles from what we know of their necessity, though neither Ether, nor Ions, nor Corpuscles can be exhibited, so we infer a Future Life for mankind because it is a moral and spiritual necessity. He puts the scientist and the Spiritualist side by side, and says:—

We know, say the scientists, that the 'ether' in the atmosphere is a reality, even though it is utterly beyond the reach of our experience, and this because the facts of light cannot be explained without it. So also, to my mind, do we know that the immortal life is a reality, even though, like the 'ether,' this immortal life is utterly beyond the reach of our conscious experience, because the facts of human life cannot be explained without it. We know, say the chemists, that the invisible ions and corpuscles are real, because the facts of the visible elements cannot be understood without them. So also do we know that the invisible life beyond the grave is real, because the facts of this visible life cannot be understood without it. We know, say the scientists, that Nature is not chaotic but uniform through all time and space, because all the known facts of human experi-

ence demand that hypothesis for their rational explanation. So also do we know that we are immortal, because all the known facts of human life demand that hypothesis for their satisfactory explanation.

Of course this turns upon the question whether the Universe is perfectly sane, and whether inferences from the known to the unknown are always legitimate and valid. At all events there is a profound truth in the suggestion of James Martineau, that we believe in a future life, not because we can prove it, but we are always trying to prove it because we seem forced to believe it. 'The conception of immortality is true,' says Mr. Holmes, 'in the same way that all the greater conceptions of modern science are true—true because the integrity of the human reason demands its reality.'

It is probably not only natural but desirable that sudden death, especially by violence, should excite horror. It is good that we should be induced to take care of life, and it is also good that we should be horrified by the forcible taking it away. But that need not prevent us seeing that escape from prolonged suffering or weariness is a blessed thing, and that the escape of the spirit-self into spirit-life, even by swift violence, may not be an evil. What we too often forget—and it is strange we should ever forget it—is that death is inevitable; and, that being so, the shortest and easiest way must be the best. That way may always look like catastrophe, but in reality it is probably always the kindest.

We have been led to these thoughts by a discourse in which the somewhat original-minded preacher said:—

I sometimes think that no more merciful death could have been chosen for that noble brother of ours, Abraham Lincoln, than the swift bullet which brought instant oblivion to his deadly weariness. His work was done. It had been a Titan's task. Strong and brave and tender and loving he had held himself through it all. Worn and weary, deadly weary, he was. Then, in an instant, the burden was dropped, rest came, the soul passed on to his God and our God, to serve in what other spheres we know not, and the poor, tired, worn-out body was laid to rest.

We agree. It is said that Lincoln had a foreshadowing of his fate. If so, it is highly probable, we might say it is certain, that he suffered more from the premonition than from the shot. To the spectators or survivors it was horrible: but to Lincoln it really was a glorious short cut home.

The preacher of this discourse took the unusual and morbid view that any escape from the body is a blessing; but, without sharing that view, we may safely say that, as death is inevitable some time, he is usually to be envied who most quickly gets through. But unhappy and pitifully mistaken is he who deliberately hastens the going away.

An American book, by G. C. Eggleston, 'Recollections of a Varied Life,' tells a remarkable story of the production of Colonel Hay's famous 'Pike County Ballads.' The idea came to him in church, and he straightway fell to writing the wonderful poem 'Little Breeches.' Within a week all the Ballads were written, and then the writer

suddenly dried up. A certain editor offered him a price that took his breath away for another ballad, but Hay protested that the little mine was worked out; and, telling the story afterwards, he said:—

There were no more Pike County ballads in me, and there never have been any since. Let me tell you a queer thing about that. From the hour when the last of the ballads was written until now, I have never been able to feel that they were mine, that my mind had anything to do with their creation, or that they bore any trace of kinship to my thought or my intellectual impulses. They seem utterly foreign to me—as foreign as if I had first encountered them in print, as the work of somebody else. It is a strange feeling.

We have received from Messrs. Macmillan two rather notable books; a new one to which we this week pay particular attention (on p. 126), and the other a cheap edition of an old book, Mrs. Oliphant's great story, 'The Beleaguered City,' a book which has delighted thousands of spiritually awakened people and which, in this beautiful cheap edition, ought to delight millions more.

Though a cheap edition, there is nothing cheap about the workmanship. Type and paper are excellent, the binding dainty but serviceable, and, though running to two hundred and sixty-seven pages, it is so light that it might be put into a pocket and not felt.

'The Kalpaka: A Magazine of Knowledge' (Madras) is one of many serious little religious and philosophical ventures now noticeable in India as one of the signs of the times in that growingly interesting country. In a recent number it makes the fruitful remark that death begins in earnest when one loses interest in the real good of existence. 'Interest is the invigorator of life.' The past is a memory: the future an anticipation. 'Death is nothing but a change,' and the man who knows and believes that need never lose interest. Even when 'the outward man perishes,' as Paul said, 'the inward man is renewed day by day'—renewed, that is to say, with fresh interests, hopes and aspirations. That, after all, is 'Salvation': that is 'passing from death unto life.'

'Some Noble Souls,' by Elizabeth Severs (London: Theosophical Publishing Society), is both a serious and a pleasant work, but the collection of 'noble souls' is a curious one, beginning with Pythagoras and Socrates and ending with Colonel Olcott and Mrs. Besant, and a dozen others between, including such incongruities as Synesius of Cyrene and Madame Blavatsky, St. Francis of Assisi and Viscount Falkland, Joan of Arc and The Bab. There is a high tone throughout the book, the result of refined thinking and a nice skill in phrasing. Moreover, the little Studies are informing. Seven portraits distinctly add to the value of the book.

TRANSITION OF THE HON. PERCY WYNDHAM.

By the passing to spirit life on Monday last of the Hon. Percy Scawen Wyndham, father of Mr. George Wyndham, M.P., in his seventy-sixth year, the London Spiritualist Alliance loses one more of its founders and 'LIGHT' one of its oldest subscribers. Mr. Wyndham was deeply interested in all psychic problems, and many years ago Mr. William Eglinton visited him at his home for the purpose of holding séances for slate-writing and other phenomena. He was one of the nine gentlemen who subscribed to the memorandum and articles of association when the London Spiritualist Alliance was incorporated in 1896, and has been one of its vice-presidents ever since. Of the nine signatories to the memorandum above referred to, Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, Colonel G. L. Le M. Taylor, Mr. J. F. Collingwood, and Mr. H. Withall are alone left to us here. Mr. and Mrs. Wyndham celebrated their golden wedding in October last. We tender our sincere condolences to Mrs. Wyndham and family.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

A meeting of the Members and Associates of the Alliance will be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, SUFFOLK-STREET, PALL MALL EAST (near the National Gallery), on

THURSDAY EVENING, MARCH 30TH,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN

BY

MR. ERNEST W. BEARD,

ON

'OUR SPIRIT FRIENDS AND THE EVIDENCE OF THEIR IDENTITY.'

The doors will be opened at 7 o'clock, and the Address will be commenced punctually at 7.30.

Admission by ticket only. Two tickets are sent to each Member, and one to each Associate, but both Members and Associates can have additional tickets for the use of friends on payment of 1s. each. Applications for extra tickets, accompanied by remittance, should be addressed to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Hon. Secretary to the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

Meetings will also be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East, S.W. (near the National Gallery), on the following Thursday evenings:—

April 27.—Rev. Arthur Chambers (Vicar of Brockenhurst, and Author of 'Our Life After Death,' 'Man and the Spiritual World,' &c.): 'Spiritualism and the Light it Casts on Christian Truth.'

May 11.—Mr. E. E. Fournier d'Albe, B.Sc. (Lond.): 'Essential Conditions of Life in this and other Worlds.'

May 25.—Mrs. Mary Seaton, of Washington, U.S.A.: 'Spiritualism and Theosophy: their Similarities and Dissimilarities—from an Onlooker's View-point.'

MEETINGS AT 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE, W.C. FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On *Tuesday next*, March 21st, Mr. J. J. Vango will give clairvoyant descriptions, at 3 p.m., and no one will be admitted after that hour. Fee 1s. each to Members and Associates; for friends introduced by them, 2s. each.

AURAL DRAWINGS.—On *Wednesday next*, March 22nd, and succeeding Wednesdays, from 12 noon to 5 p.m., Mr. Percy R. Street will give personal delineations by means of the colours of the psychic aura of sitters. Fee 5s. to a guinea. Appointments desirable. See advertisement supplement.

PSYCHICAL SELF-CULTURE CLASS.—On *Thursday next*, March 23rd, an address on 'Magic' will be given by Mr. J. I. Wedgwood. Discussion.

FRIENDLY INTERCOURSE.—Members and Associates are invited to attend the rooms at 110, St. Martin's-lane, on Friday afternoons, from 3 to 4, and to introduce friends interested in Spiritualism, for informal conversation, the exchange of experiences, and mutual helpfulness.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—On *Friday next*, March 24th, at 4 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under spirit control, will reply to questions relating to life here and on 'the other side,' mediumship, and the phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism generally. Admission 1s.; Members and Associates free. MEMBERS have the privilege of introducing one friend to this meeting without payment. Visitors should be prepared with written inquiries of general interest to submit to the control. Students and inquirers alike will find these meetings especially useful in helping them to solve perplexing problems and to realise the actuality of spirit personality.

SPECIAL EVENING MEETINGS.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—On *Wednesday next*, March 22nd, at the Rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., at 7 p.m. prompt, Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under spirit control, will reply to questions from the audience. Admission: Members and Associates, 1s. each; visiting friends, 2s. No admission after seven o'clock. March 29th, Mrs. Place-Veary will give clairvoyant descriptions of spirit people.

A REMARKABLE MEDIUM.

BY HERMANN BRINKMANN.

Having recently been afforded an opportunity of reading the reports of the séances held with the Cologne medium, 'Frau Edeltraud,' who, I think, may well be classed among the best automatic-writing mediums, I consider it my duty to make the people of the English-speaking world, through the kindness of your excellent paper, familiar with the occurrences witnessed with this medium, which occurrences, partly on account of the great modesty of the lamented medium, who was as highly gifted psychically as she was an idealist in character, and partly on account of the great care and restraint of the experimenters, the brothers Feilgenhauer (the ingenious founders of the 'Deutsche Spiritisten-Verein' and well-known in the literature of Spiritism), have so far come but little to the notice of the general public.

Baron Dr. Carl du Prel, the famous philosopher, expressed himself in a letter to the Messrs. Feilgenhauer with regard to the mediumship of Frau Edeltraud to the effect that the communications from this medium were most excellent and of an astounding character, and, when carefully compiled, well fit to afford incontestable evidence for the identity of those passed on. He offered to conduct a series of séances, but his early death, with a preceding long illness, prevented him from doing so. Right here I would like to mention that Dr. Carl du Prel, shortly after his demise, gave, through the medium Frau Edeltraud, excellent tests of his survival, to which I shall revert more fully later on.

Since her early maidenhood the medium saw apparitions of the so-called dead, shortly after their demise, without having known that the persons thus seen were no longer among the living. However, she accustomed herself to these sights, and as nobody did or would understand her she kept much by herself and at last did not worry her head about them. It was only through the Messrs. Feilgenhauer, whose acquaintance she made when she was about twenty years of age, that she first heard something about Spiritualism and its philosophy. At that time, these gentlemen had already made a name in occult circles in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Trained psychologists, they recognised at once the powerful mediumistic gifts of this lady, and thanks to their methodical and most cautious proceedings the medium developed her powers to an astounding degree. It was chiefly through automatic writing that she obtained communications. Many persons and scientists of no mean standing were converted through the irrefutable tests that she gave to them. It was characteristic of her communications that they were not of the prattling, tedious nature so often met with through inferior mediums, but the messages were precise, short, exact copies of the mode of expression and the character of those on the other side; the signatures to the writing were identical with the earthly script of the communicating intelligences. These were not, as a rule, highly distinguished personages, such as royalties, &c., but were mostly relatives and friends of the sitters, whose sayings could easily be verified, the more so as very often the same messages were given independently, and at the same time, through other mediums in quite different circles sitting in different parts of the town or quite different towns.

During the séances the medium was lying in the deepest state of trance, thus excluding all possibility on the one hand of deception, and, on the other, of the interference of her sub-consciousness, which of course added greatly to the value of the communications. The position she would take during this state of entrancement was striking, even to the unbeliever. A photograph shows her sunk from a stool in such a way that her head almost touched the floor, the head always moving to and fro like a pendulum and as if someone were rocking her. The centre of gravity was placed outside the stool, a feature which could hardly be imitated by a clever acrobat. It struck one as if the whole body was being held in suspense by some unseen force. Two medical men who regularly took part in the séances convinced themselves that the pulse and the beating of the heart could in no wise be felt; the arteries on the forehead were swollen as thick as a finger, her feet also were much swollen.

Frequently the sensibility was placed right outside the body; the forcibly-opened eyelids showed the pupils turned quite up-

wards. In this state she was able to see most exactly any object in the semi-dark room in which she was sitting, as well as in adjoining rooms. She even repeated words which were merely thought by persons in another room. Words taken from any book and pointed to by a person in a different room were instantly written down by her. She generally remained in this deep state of trance from three to four hours by the advice of her guides who wanted to develop her as a materialising medium. Unfortunately this could not be so, as a severe illness set in which terminated fatally.

The writings were always accompanied by the sounds of knocks, which changed from the softest to the most powerful hammer knocks. Questions, after the well-known alphabetic system, were put and answered. Occasionally big articles of furniture were removed without being touched by anyone. When the medium or near relatives of hers were in trouble she would get counsel from the other side which always turned out to be a blessing to those concerned. Messages of this kind she received through writing whilst in her normal state. The career of this medium is a fine illustration of the high degree of perfection to which a gifted psychic can be brought if she is taken care of by trusted and trained experts in matters psychological, such as the brothers Feilgenhauer undoubtedly are. Thanks to the unswerving efforts of these gentlemen the mediumship of Frau Edeltraud never degenerated an iota, and remained on the same high level up to her lamented death. The operators would never allow questions to be put to the medium irrelevant to the high goal they had in view. The séances were considered as a service to the cause of truth, although nothing was left out to insure the genuineness of the communications received.

(To be continued).

SPIRITUALISM AND 'CASSELL'S MAGAZINE.'

Under the heading 'If a man die, shall he live again?' Miss H. A. Dallas contributes to the March number of 'Cassell's Magazine' an able article setting forth some of the evidence which justifies belief in continued conscious existence. Many persons speak of the 'bourne from which no traveller returns,' as though authority attached to that pronouncement; but Miss Dallas points out that there is evidence, both recent and reliable, that some travellers *do* occasionally return. She quotes a remarkable case, published by the Society for Psychical Research, in which a lady wrote automatically a letter to somebody unknown to her, the caligraphy of which was recognised by the receiver as resembling that of a person who had been dead for some years, while the contents referred to matters known only to that person. With reference to the instances of apparitions of the departed, of which she quotes a well-authenticated case from Mr. F. W. H. Myers' work on 'Human Personality,' Miss Dallas remarks that those who think they can explain away the facts by using the word 'telepathy' fail to realise all that the admission of the telepathic theory implies. She says:—

If we admit that thought can travel from mind to mind without using the bodily senses, even in this life, why should it not still be possible, if man survives the death of the body, for him to express himself and transmit his thought? If when he is *dying* his mind can communicate with friends at a distance, or he can appear to bid them farewell, why may he not do so when he has altogether left the body? The materialistic assumption that mind cannot act apart from a physical body seems to break down in the face of facts like these, particularly when we observe that many of these apparitions were seen *some time* after the death has occurred.

After warning investigators to be on their guard against charlatans and tricksters, and to cultivate a sound and critical judgment, she concludes her very useful article by quoting the testimony of Sir Wm. Crookes, Professor Zöllner, Dr. Hodgson, and Sir Oliver Lodge.

'LEST WE FORGET.'—Notable Anniversaries: March 19th, S. F. Butterworth (Blackpool), *trs.* 1908; 20th, Mrs. E. Lutley Boucher, *trs.* 1898; 22nd, Isabel, Lady Burton, *trs.* 1896; 23rd, Thomas Gales Foster, *trs.* 1886; 23rd, Carl Hansen, *trs.* 1897; 23rd, James Swindlehurst, *trs.* 1901; 23rd, Thomas Lake Harris, *trs.* 1906; 24th, Miss Georgiana Houghton, *trs.* 1884; 24th, Charles Lacey, *trs.* 1904.

THOUGHTS ON SOUL EVOLUTION.

It is often said that the soul comes from God. But we are still left to wonder in what way it comes. And we may well ask ourselves if there be anything that does not come from God? The saying, then, does not convey very much; although it might with some people seem to settle the question. As the soul cannot be seen or handled, it may seem to be entirely mysterious; still, is it really more so than the visible and tangible? If we try to trace anything back to its original source, we are led to the one great mystery of Being. Why is it that things are? How is it that things are? It would be almost more reasonable to believe that things are not, because they cannot be, were it not that we are conscious that they are.

Consciousness, then, is of fundamental importance. If we become unconscious, the universe is nothing to us. If the universe were entirely devoid of consciousness, of what avail would it all be? But the universe is not without consciousness, for we are ourselves proofs and witnesses of the fact.

The animal world is conscious throughout; though in degree and variety. The vegetable world, although at first sight appearing to be in this respect entirely different from the animal, is found on closer investigation to be linked up with it. And so we may reasonably conclude that the vegetable world is also throughout conscious, although in a less intense, less specialised manner than the animal. But can we fairly conclude that, previous to the coming of vegetable and animal life, the universe was entirely without consciousness?

At one time it was taught that matter was naturally still, until acted upon by some external force. Now, however, scientists tell us that all matter is in motion; that the atom, once supposed to be the smallest particle, and basis, is itself composed of numberless smaller parts, that are constantly in motion, and are comparatively at great distances from each other.

Since we do not get consciousness without movement, can we have movement without consciousness? Be that as it may, the movements of electrons would seem to demonstrate will-power as being connected with, and inseparable from, matter. And will-power is a mental attribute.

Spiritualists are familiar with the phenomena of psychometry. A good psychometrist, on handling an article that has frequently been worn by a person, receives impressions from it relating to the life and surroundings of that person. In some cases, on handling a stone, impressions of the surroundings of that stone in past ages are obtained. This is very wonderful and startling to the investigator. What are we to infer from it? So far as the psychometrist is concerned, it proves him to possess a sense that is not generally known to exist. But it does more than this: it proves that material, devoid of organic life, is impressed by the subtle influences of its surroundings; that it retains those impressions, and can convey them to some living beings. Is not this a mental process, including memory and reflex action?

It would appear, then, that at least some of the attributes of mind are also attributes of matter; and since without matter and its emanations we have no knowledge of mind, may it not be that the two are inseparable, and that it is a mistake to think of them as being two separate things in their essence?

We fall into a similar error when we try to divorce the concrete and the abstract. For instance, take a concrete block of wood, and from it abstract the qualities of length, breadth and depth, and what becomes of the wood? If we define length, breadth or depth, we have nothing tangible, yet in thinking of the wood they are necessary to give an image.

Although there are reasons for thinking matter and mind are from the first inseparable, there appears to be no evidence that inorganic matter has individuality.

The conditions of this planet when organic life first appeared were very different from those at present existing. The earth had not cooled to the extent that it has now, and many of the elements that we find as solids were then in a liquid or gaseous state.

Even inorganic things, as we have seen, do not remain in the same condition, but are constantly changing, in accordance with the action of their surroundings. The experiences gained in this

way are stored up within, and, in accordance with the law of reflex action, the power of doing fresh things is constantly increasing. Energy is continually accumulating and differentiating. The forces of Nature must have been in great activity at the time of the dawn of life, and the plastic elements would respond most readily to the impressions from outside; consequently an immense amount of experience would be gained, and it is probable that the power of reflex action would become much stronger and more powerful, more so in some places than in others, gradually leading to centralisation. This centralisation would at first be somewhat indefinite, but eventually individual cells would evolve, forming part of a mass like themselves. This would be the first appearance of 'the Ego.'

The lower forms of organic life show their close affinity with the inorganic by the forms in which they appear. If the forms of crystals be compared with those of vegetable life, and also with those of the lower animal life, a close resemblance is observed. Everyone has noticed the beautiful forms that appear on a frosty window; forms that are almost identical with those of ferns, mosses and other vegetation. Similarly, if snowflakes be compared with the lowest animal life, the same resemblances will be seen. With the organic forms, however, is the power of assimilating suitable adjacent matter, and imparting to it the same life and condition as they possess themselves. The single cell absorbs, assimilates, grows, and divides into two. There are now two living beings where there was but one; two portions of material in place of one; two souls evolved from one soul. In the lowest life the senses are not specialised, and there are no organs of sight, hearing, tasting, smelling, &c.; but the whole substance is sensitive in a general way. The senses have been evolved by cells, while dividing, still adhering to each other, and learning to do special work that is useful to the general body. Here we have a composite body, and in addition to the life of the individual cell there is the life or soul of the community, which we are accustomed to look upon as the individual. The different organs and senses of the individual have required ages for their evolution and development; from the lowliest conditions of life until we reach man, the masterpiece, who is still imperfect in the individual and in the race, and who is still working for further development. These vast and marvellous results have been attained by the constant working of energy on, and through, matter* and its derivatives. There has been the constant receiving of impressions from without†; these always leave their results, and cause action to be set up, which action, constantly going on, leads to the development of faculties and the strengthening of the will.

By change of surroundings and conditions, the individual is compelled to increased effort, and to effort of a different nature or in other directions; and when this is continued generation after generation, the results accumulate, and become fixed. All living beings are striving after the gratification of their desires; and this leads to progress. The efforts made to attain this satisfaction are not always successful, and often lead to destruction. This destruction is a law working in the direction of eliminating the unsuitable. Again, many desires, when their ends are attained, result in destruction. This also is in the direction of eliminating the unsuitable. But before destruction there comes pain in many cases; as this is not to be desired, the individual is led by it to change the direction of its efforts; that is, to alter its conduct. If the individual's first desires, in spite of the pain, remain and dominate the conduct, destruction ensues; and that individual is also eliminated as unsuitable.

The operation of these laws leads to the formation of habits, and the evolution of instinct.

We have seen that the senses and functions have been differentiated and developed, by certain cells applying themselves to special work. Among the special functions is that of reproduction. In the single cell animal reproduction is the result of the growth and division of the cell, which then becomes two living animals. The power, or soul, which functioned in one, then functions in two. It is the soul which has been evolved

* The term matter in this article is intended to include ether, from which it is evolved.

† This includes all spiritual influences.

by the experiences of its ancestors ; ancestors of which it is itself really a part. In the case of multicellular animals, the function of reproduction is carried on by a particular class of cells, which make up the organs of reproduction. In the most lowly types there is no division of sex, no male and female ; but a single cell from the reproductive organ will divide and subdivide continually, until it becomes as the parent animal. The soul, or formative power, is part of the parent, and is the result of the accumulated experience of itself and its ancestors, to which it is so closely connected.

Higher in the scale of animal life there comes a division of the sexes, and we have male and female with special reproductive organs. At the time of conception a specialised cell from the male unites with a specialised cell from the female, and the work of building up the new body begins at once. The life force or soul is there complete ; received from two parents, and inheriting from both powers and characteristics which are the result of their experiences and the experiences of their ancestors, many and various. This is the method of reproduction common to all the higher forms of animal life, including man.

There is a common opinion that the soul does not enter the unborn child until what is known as the time of quickening. No grounds whatever exist for this idea. The life principle, formative power, or soul, is present from the time of conception. It exists previously in parts, in the two parents. Neither of these parts alone could progress, but would soon be absorbed or dissipated.

Once conception has taken place, a new soul comes into existence, which, according to the evidence of spirits who have passed over to the other side, is immortal, and even if not developed and born alive in the body on this side, it yet continues to grow, and comes to maturity in the spirit world.

Some persons entertain the belief that the father is the sole source of origin ; and the time of the individual's coming into existence is placed previous to the time of conception. We have, however, abundance of evidence around us to justify the rejection of this idea. The characteristics in the offspring of the mother and her ancestors are quite as apparent as those of the father and his ancestors. This is very marked in the case of hybrids.

Although at conception a new soul comes into existence, it is probably in a low state of consciousness, though in a high state of activity. Its work then is the building up of the body for its use and development. As this work comes nearer fulfilment, consciousness is more and more developed, though even at birth it is still low. Contact, however, with the physical world rapidly develops consciousness and trains the senses.

In a general way, the origin and development of the individual follow much the same lines as the origin of the race, back to the single cell.

Consciousness, which is very low in the first animal life, increases the higher we rise in the scale, until we reach man, with his birthright of high intelligence, reason, imagination and moral and spiritual sense. All men, however, are not equally conscious. Consciousness is a thing capable of continuous growth. If we live on the right lines it will constantly increase, and in the conditions of the spirit world will be far more intense and highly developed than it is here. Of course, in old age the senses frequently become dimmed ; but that is only temporary, and the internal powers of the soul may be growing all the time.

Many thoughtful persons have asked the question whether the souls of the lower animals are immortal. As we cannot while on this side definitely determine the answer to that question ourselves, we must have recourse to those who have passed on. Some spirits have replied that the lower animals are in a world of their own after passing over ; others have stated that they can have their favourite pets with them if they wish ; and others, again, have said that although the souls of animals may persist for a time after separation from the body, yet eventually they are dissipated, as the mentality is not sufficient to preserve them for long away from the material. They add, however, that the love of human spirits will do much to preserve the entity of their favourites. If we conclude from these messages that the lower animals are not immortal, it may well be asked when and how the human spirit attained to the high condition of

immortality. It could not have been a sudden change, but a gradual growth. We have seen that the animals below man that possess mentality most nearly resembling man's mentality do persist for a time after leaving the material body. It is said in 'Oahspe' that the earliest men were not all immortal, and that a large proportion of them died like the beasts. But as the mentality improved and the spiritual nature developed, more and more of them rose to the high condition of immortality. There are also the traditions about gnomes, fairies, earth spirits, &c., who lived for a considerable time on earth after separation from their material bodies ; but who could not rise, and have now passed away. And still, in mankind, we have many, many grades of spirits ; some who rise quickly and, pass full of life and brightness, to the higher spheres ; others who, blind to higher things, are bound to the earth in some cases for very prolonged periods.

We know that one of the great means of raising the souls of men is the influence of the good spirits who have lived on earth, and are now passed on. But in the earliest days of the human race, and possibly for ages before, we may well believe that there were good spirits who had originated in other worlds, and who made it their work and their pleasure to help upward the spirits of earth.

A. L. W.

ROBERT BLATCHFORD AND LIFE AFTER DEATH.

The best of Robert Blatchford is that he is the master of a practically perfect style. The worst of him is that his style runs away with him and lands him in continual exaggerations and contradictions. That is the penalty one has to pay for a 'fatal facility.' Someone has sent us his 'Clarion' Article on 'What Thing Cometh After Death?' possibly to point this 'fatal facility' out to us.

Mr. Blatchford does not want to live after his body's ending, and, as usual, he is not content to say so and have done with it : he must needs treat his page as a bath and swim in it ; so he says :—

We do not ask to begin the innings all over again. It's a better score than we expected to make. Good men were run out before they got set, or were bowled off their pads, or caught miraculously on the boundary, and are out for ducks. Go in again ? My stars ! Look at the wicket. Look at the bowling. Go in again ? We got three shooters in our first over, and one of them made the bail shake. Start afresh ? Thank you for nothing : what's my score ?

Now you may say that I am quite off the subject of Bellerby's letter. I am talking about living the same life over again ; and have said nothing about a future world or a future state. But, go slow. Have I not said that I do not wish to be myself again ? Very well ; if I am to be somebody else, myself is dead. If I wish not to be myself in another world, what is the use of wishing to be somebody else ? If my personality ceases to exist and a new personality takes its place, then I am not immortal. If my personality is to persist, then I don't want to be immortal. I should grow absolutely sick of myself. Fancy being your own old threadbare, dogs-eared, weary self for ever and ever ; and no 'amen.' It is unthinkable.

And so on, and so on. But, having swum thus far, he turns and faces the sun shining through the window and lighting up the little ripples, so he returns in thought to 'Bellerby' and says that life is a jolly good thing if you have imagination ; for, if you have imagination, you live lots of lives in one. 'One life ?' he cries :—

Every man with imagination lives hundreds of lives. I have lived three in one week ; with a little assistance from William Morris or Henry James. And really, if one could go on being oneself and somebody else at the same time, a few more aeons might be endurable.

For instance. Suppose I am a sorcery man. I come to Bellerby, and I say : 'So you want to go right to sleep ?' All right. But do not be hasty. Here is a proposal. When your time comes, drink this elixir. You will then die. But, after a little while, you will awaken. You will find that you are young, and fair, and strong ; and a stranger of shining presence will take you by the hand, and will say to you, "Come : we are now in the Milky Way ; yonder, a short flight hence, in the star cluster of Perseus, is a strange world. It is quite unlike your world. It is very wonderful, and full of beauty and adventure. Who knows but there you shall meet some loved long since and lost awhile ? Who knows what love and glory yonder star may hold ? Follow me !"

Suppose as the Sorcerer I could tell that tale to Bellerby (and suppose the hard-shelled sceptic could believe me), do you think he would not drink the elixir ? I wonder.

So Mr. Blatchford answers himself beautifully.

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A 'WONDER' BOOK.

The author of 'Confessio Medici' has just given his readers, through Messrs. Macmillan, a new book entitled 'I wonder': 'Essays for Young People.' The sub-title is scarcely serious. The book is indeed gaily and simply written, but it is really suited for only quite serious and seasoned persons. That may be only a matter of opinion, just as it was and is a matter of opinion whether Charles Kingsley's 'Water Babies' was really a book for young people.

The writer of 'I wonder' is very modern; modern in his knowledge, his smartness, his dexterity and his slang; and his brilliant banter is as remarkable as his merciless spiritual surgery: for, with all his light-hearted persiflage, he is a most inexorable dissector. His eight brief Essays are all on Wonder—the way of Wonder, the Wonder of Matter, the Wonder of Nature, the Wonder of Self, the Wonder of Pain, the Wonder of Death, the Wonder of Beauty and the use of Wonder; and on each of these subjects he is supremely an enlightener, blending with his instruction a delightful pleasantness of manner and gaiety of style that inevitably carries one on willingly to the end.

The three Essays on the Wonder of Matter, the Wonder of Nature, and the Wonder of Self, are masterly presentations of modern knowledge or speculation concerning our relation to external things, or the shows of things. In about fifty easily read pages, this writer has packed, and with plenty of gay wrapping, nearly all that is to be said at present as to the broad facts respecting the commerce between the senses and the so-called material world. And it is all done with such dexterous verbal conjuring that specially sharp girls and boys might pick it all up and understand—so far as anyone can understand: for, truly, the magic of it all is past finding out.

But we must resist the temptation to play with this charming physician in his wonderworld of laboratory and garden, and with Mother Nature and her game of Peep-Bo and Pretending, always seeming one thing and being another: for we have made up our minds to concentrate attention upon the sixth Essay, on 'The Wonder of Death,' in which, indeed, we find what we have called 'his merciless surgery,' and yet relieved by his pleasant banter and reassuring smile.

The first words are what no one would expect to find:

a kind of beautiful politeness in opening the door into the surgery. Here they are: 'You cannot be a perfect gentleman, or a perfect lady, unless you think, from time to time, of your death.'

Written by one, of whose writings we otherwise knew nothing, that might be taken as an oddity, or as the opening of a dismal discourse: but it is nothing of the kind. It simply means that a perfect gentleman, or perfect lady, shrinks from nothing, but wishes to be ready for all emergencies, and to do everything in a seemly way. 'Put aside the common judgment,' he says, 'that such thoughts are cowardly, sentimental, or unwholesome.' 'I advise you to study how a gentleman dies'; and then he bids us read carefully the ending of Hamlet. Here was violence, treachery, and all that we call a terrible end, but, after killing the king, Hamlet 'makes harmony of these discords, and radiance of this gloom; and the poisoned cup, at the last, glows like the cup of the Sangreal: such honour, courage, patriotism and submission are in him.' We do not quite see it so, but we are quite with this writer in his picturesque and subtle analysis of the Morality Play, 'Everyman,' and especially in his description of the presentation of Death in that Play, with God above him and sending him, Death being 'His beadle, His vengeance, under orders.' 'He was dreadful but, Heaven be praised, he was not God.' 'Above the stage, behind the scenes, was the explanation of him.' That old Morality Play was a serious business, and we can hardly believe that simple folk paid their money to go and see Death and what must happen to Everyman, and to hear God up aloft censuring them and ordering Death to go and call them to account. But those old Plays need, for their explanation and publicity and popularity, the background of the Church which took very seriously indeed this primary matter of Life and Death, and God presiding over both. Therefore, in this Play of 'Everyman,' the ending is a frank demonstration of the way of Salvation through the offices and mediatorship of the Church and her priests. All this is not told us by the writer of this book, who describes the old performance of the Play in terms of bare secularity.

He is, however, perfectly right in his inference that the people did not shrink from but invited the honest facing of death: and this is what he is advocating. 'If anybody says that you are trying to lift a veil, or to see what is hidden from you, pay no heed to him or her,' he says. 'There is no more veil between me and my death than between me and my dinner; indeed, there is not so much; for I may be disappointed of my dinner, but am sure of my death. It has been, since my birth, the one event bound to happen to me; the one fact which steadily refuses to wear a veil.'

The Essay ends with a warning and a longing; a warning concerning the decay of belief in life persistent beyond the ceasing of the physical body, and the longing to hear fitting music to celebrate 'death.' The writer, facing a man who may be drifting towards loss of faith, says something like this:—Let me advise you what to do if this should happen. Try to say but little about it. Be patient. There is no hurry. If you change your outlook once, you may change it again. As far as may be, keep within the reach of religious observances. Don't mind being a little inconsistent. Be sure that there is a meaning in Death, and that he has a master over him. Try to feel that you are a guest, as in a great country house. You have been asked for a time, and your business is to be accommodating, never rude, never selfish, never fretful about overstaying your welcome. All is provided for—including your departure; and, beyond that, there will be home.

The longing is a pure bit of Spiritualism—that we might hear music adequate to the noble happening we call ‘death.’ ‘At a funeral,’ says this writer, ‘I long to hear the Hallelujah Chorus, and not the Dead March from “Saul!”’ ‘When it is my turn, may there be no hint, in words or in music, that my going was half so strange as my staying: no bewildered airs on the organ, like questions put and not answered, no comparison of me to Saul: let my ashes, like a very poor offertory, mostly pennies, be used *ad majorem gloriam dei*, to say that the wonder of Death is nothing, compared to the wonder of Life: and the Kingdom of Death is nowhere, compared to the Kingdom of God.’

SIR OLIVER LODGE ON SCIENCE AND RELIGION.

At a meeting of the National Free Church Council, at Portsmouth, on the 9th inst., Sir Oliver Lodge, dealing with ‘The Christian Revelation from a Scientific Point of View,’ spoke out as clearly and emphatically as the most ardent Spiritualist could wish, when he declared that ‘he had no doubt that the departed could hold intercourse with the living.’ He is reported to have said:—

Part of our experience was the connection of spirit with matter. We were conscious of our identity, our own mind and purpose and will. Through the mechanism of the brain we could influence the material world; we were in it, but not of it. Why seek to deny either the spiritual or the material? Both were real, both true. In some higher mind, perhaps, they might be unified.

After a close and searching investigation, said Sir Oliver, he had come to the conclusion that there was a range of beings, extending up from man to the Deity, who were able, in certain favourable conditions, to hold communication with each other. He had no doubt that the departed dead could hold intercourse with the living. This opened out a vast field for further psychic investigation, and he called on the young scientists of the coming generation to devote themselves to this fascinating study. We should not imagine that existence hereafter would be something so wholly remote and different, as we could not learn by the testimony of experience here. Sir Oliver said the bare possibility of the existence of the miraculous had been hastily denied. It was not necessary to object to miracles on scientific grounds. They need be no more impossible, no more lawless, than the interference of a human being would seem to a colony of ants or bees. (Loud cheers.)

Dealing with the real simplicity of apparently most complex things, the speaker said the idea of God was essentially simple. God could be depicted as a powerful and loving friend, with whom our spirits might commune at every hour of the day—One whose patience and wisdom and long-suffering and beneficence were never exhausted.

‘No matter how complex and transcendently vast the reality must be, the Christian conception of God is humanly simple. It appeals to “the man in the street,” and this is always the way with the greatest things. The sunshine is not the sun, but it is the human and terrestrial aspect of the sun: it is that which matters in human life. It is independent of study and discovery, it is given us by direct experience and for ordinary life it suffices.’ (Cheers.)

Sir Oliver concluded with a few sentences which made a deep spiritual impression:—

‘Thus would I represent the Christian conception of God. Christ is the human and practical and workaday aspect. Christ is the sunshine—that fraction of transcendental Deity which suffices for the earth. Jesus of Nazareth is plainly a terrestrial heritage. His advent is the glory, His reception the shame, of the human race.’ (Cheers.)

SEVERAL communications intended for this issue of ‘LIGHT’ are unavoidably held over till next week.

WE are informed by a correspondent that at meetings recently held at Helsingfors, Finland, Mr. Ervart lectured on ‘The Spirit World and the Spirit People’ and ‘The Proof of Spirit Return,’ and Mr. A. V. Peters gave clairvoyant descriptions. At the second meeting more than six hundred people crowded into a small theatre, standing where they could not sit. The spiritual power was so great, and the evidences of spirit presence afforded by the clairvoyant so convincing, that at the close men and women were crying for joy!

‘REMARKABLE EXPERIENCES OF FORGOTTEN PIONEERS.’

ADDRESS BY MR. ANGUS McARTHUR.

On Thursday evening, the 2nd inst., at the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Mr. Angus McArthur delivered an Address on ‘Psychic Phenomena in England, 600 A.D. to 1200 A.D.; the Remarkable Experiences of Forgotten Pioneers,’ to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Mr. H. Withall, the vice-president, occupying the chair.

(Continued from page 116.)

It is almost impossible to take up any records of the period we are now considering, at any point, without coming across accounts of incidents which, misunderstood and perhaps misrepresented, bear the obvious traces of their psychic origin. Between the years 660 and 670 a severe visitation of the plague was raging in England. Here is an episode from its records, as summarised in Dr. Hunt’s ‘History of the English Church to the Norman Conquest’:—

The plague appears to have lingered a long time in Essex, for some years later it fell heavily on the newly-founded monastery at Barking. It first attacked the men’s monastery, and as the ‘Mother of the Congregation’ saw each day some of the monks carried forth to be buried, she thought anxiously of the hour when the plague would begin among the sisters, who, though living in the same settlement as the monks, were, of course, entirely separated from them. She would often talk with the sisters when they met in chapter about fixing on a place for a cemetery, where they might be laid when their time came.

Nothing was settled until one night, after they had sung the psalms at lauds in their church with the aged monk and his assistant who conducted their services, they went out to sing them over again, as they were wont to do, by the newly-made graves in the monks’ cemetery. As they sang in the darkness a bright light from the sky shone upon them, and they were afraid, so that they ceased to sing. The light moved until it rested over the southern part of the monastery to the west of their church, and then they knew the place where their bodies should await the Day of Resurrection. It was not long before the new cemetery was used. There was in the monastery a little boy named Aesica, not more than three years old, who had been dedicated to the monastic life, and as he was so young, the sisters kept him in their part of the house and fed and tended him. He was struck with the plague, and as they watched by him, he called three times for one of the sisters who lay sick in another cell, crying, “Eadgyth (Edith), Eadgyth, Eadgyth!” and so with the name of her whom he loved upon his lips the child died. The soul of Eadgyth answered to his call, and before night came she joined the child in Paradise. Another sister, as she lay dying of the plague at midnight, again and again asked the sisters who were nursing her to put out the candle, and when they did not heed her, thinking that she was delirious, she told them that she saw a light which made the candle seem dark. Later she said, ‘Burn your candle if you will, my light will come to me at dawn’; and as the day broke she entered into the light that faileth not.

Twenty years later, when the plague was still raging, we get what looks very like a case of spiritual healing. (Hunt, p. 157):

The plague, which had broken out in the north more than twenty years before, was again raging in his diocese, and Bishop Cuthbert went from place to place, speaking words of comfort to all. After speaking thus to all the survivors whom he could find in a village called Methylwong, he said to Tidi, his attendant priest, ‘Is there anyone here that has the plague now to whom I could give my blessing?’ Tidi pointed out a woman not far off, and weeping bitterly. She had already lost one son, and his little brother was lying in her arms swollen with the plague, and at the point of death. Cuthbert went to her, and kissed the face of the plague-stricken child and blessed him, bidding the mother be of good cheer, for her child should live. The boy recovered, and the mother and her son were both alive when, in after years, Tidi told what he had seen to a monk of Lindisfarne who was writing Cuthbert’s life.

About the same period arises the story of Caedmon, whose beautiful memorial cross some of you may have seen in Whitby churchyard, close to the site and ruins of the monastery where he lived and died:—

Under Hilda’s rule the double monastery at Whitby became

the home of the father of English sacred poetry. A herdsman named Caedmon—the name suggests a British descent, and he may have had a British mother—who worked on the farm of the monastery, was troubled because he lacked the gift of song then common among the English. When he and his companions sat together at feasts and the harp was handed from one to another that each might sing in turn, he would, as it came near him, rise abashed and leave the house. One night when he had done so, he went to the stable where his cattle stood, and there fell asleep. As he slept he heard one call to him, saying, 'Caedmon, sing me something.' He answered, 'I cannot sing, and that is why I have left the feast.' Again the voice said, 'Nevertheless, you must sing to me.' 'What shall I sing?' he asked. 'Sing,' the voice replied, 'the beginning of things created.' Then he sang praise to God the Creator in verses which he had never heard before. When he awoke he remembered what he had sung in his dream and added more verses to it.

Such is the contemporary story. Translated into psychic terminology, it would probably be told in slightly different words; but can there be, in the minds of this audience, the slightest doubt as to the real character of this incident? One more consideration suggests itself to me before I bring to a close these brief memories of the early experiences of some of the oldest of our island's psychics—men who, though psychics, did not guess in many cases what their real gift was, or what the actual origin of the phenomena which they witnessed. My last point is this: if there were, on the part of the regular and secular clergy, this nearness to the psychic world, combined with these occasional psychic experiences, we might expect to find not only the specific record of the facts, but some traces of a wider tradition. We should suppose that the facts would 'leak out,' so to speak, among the people, creating an influence upon its folk lore and local legends, and being themselves an element of the ancient deposit of tradition. And so, in truth, it is. Nowadays there is no widespread belief in the possession of any special psychic powers by the clergy. But thirty or forty years ago it was otherwise. In many obscure quarters of the country there still lingered the belief that the clergy could 'raise' and 'lay' spirits. They were even called 'conjurors,' with an allusion to their supposed possession of these mystic powers. Take one case from Canon Atkinson's 'Forty Years in a Moorland Parish' (in Yorkshire):—

An elderly woman living about half a mile from my house, and who had been used otherwise than well in her younger days, and in consequence was not quite sound as to some particulars in her intellect, sent to me urgently one day to go to her house, for she was in much trouble. I had seen her often, both at my residence and her own, and had a shrewd suspicion as to the nature of her trouble, and that it was spiritual, in a sense, although perhaps not quite within the province of the parish priest. On going to her house I found poor old Dinah was very much troubled indeed. She told me the house was fairly taken possession of by spirits, and that, turn which way she would, she was beset by them. She told me what spirits they were, and, in some instances, whose spirits, and what their objects and efforts were; and she had sent for me that I should 'lay them.' I tried to soothe her, and talked to her in the endeavour to divert her thoughts into a more reasonable channel. She was perfectly clear and reasonable on every other topic; but do what I would, and represent what I could, her mind continually reverted to the one subject that possessed her—namely, the actual presence of the spirits. I told her at last I could not, did not profess to 'lay spirits'; and her reply was, 'Ay, but if I had sent for a priest o' t' au'd Church, he wad a' deean (done) it. They wur a vast mair powerful conjurers than you Church priests.'

The speaker concluded by reminding his audience that their excursion into these unexplored realms of psychic lore had been the result of an inference. They felt convinced that the facts were there, and exploration revealed them. The whole of these early records of religious experience ought to be searched for the sidelights which they would undoubtedly shed upon psychic science. So far, little or nothing had been done, perhaps because the task was so gigantic. That, at all events, was the first reason which would occur to the mind for our curious apathy with regard to this vast store of experience and suggestion, which was left unsearched for its psychic lessons, though every other department of the past had been ransacked by patient students for new facts and new illustrations. But there was probably another reason

for the apathy—to wit, the tendency of psychic inquirers to concentrate upon the future rather than upon the past. It was natural that this should be so, since the convinced Spiritualist enjoyed an outlook which differed widely from that of other men. Only a few evenings before he (the speaker) had been discussing with an intimate friend, a member of that audience, the probable change in the position of the pole star, which would, in the course of the next thirty thousand or forty thousand years, so materially alter its position that it would cease to point the pole. Their conversation promptly drifted to the question of their own whereabouts in thirty thousand or forty thousand years from now; and with the inevitable thirst for knowledge strong upon them, they had consoled themselves with the belief that even then there would be something to find out, something to inquire into, and that they would be among the workers. This personal reminiscence illustrated the general tendency of psychic inquirers; and yet it was not altogether a desirable policy. By all means let them anticipate and study the future; but in the light of the few hints which he had given them that evening, he begged them not to overlook the lessons of the past as well. (Loud applause.)

After Mr. McArthur had answered some questions, Dr. Abraham Wallace referred to the private investigations which were being made by many leading persons in the religious world, and expressed the wish that to-day mediums like D. D. Home were at the service of inquirers. A hearty vote of thanks to the lecturer closed the proceedings.

'LIFE TRANSFIGURED.'

By LILIAN WHITING.

The remarkable scientific bases for the conditions of life in the ethereal, offered to the careful reader of that remarkable little book by Sir Oliver Lodge, 'The Ether of Space,' suggested to me the application of these—the endeavour to point out that here are the conditions for that ethereal life which we postulate, and of which we have abundant evidence. All believers in the vast mass of testimony that for more than sixty years has been given to the modern world, and all who discern the conditions of life after death as taught by Jesus and his disciples, accept the absolute existence of the ethereal body in some appropriate environment; but, *ecco!* here is the *most positive scientific data* of this environment which we had postulated, and believed in, suddenly presented by the authority of Sir Oliver Lodge and of other leading scientific workers. To me it seemed that our own faith (as spiritual believers) and positive knowledge (as discovered and presented by scientists) were like the two blades of scissors, or the two halves of a globe. And so, when 'LIGHT,' to which I have always been indebted for kind and gracious encouragement, characterises my 'Life Transfigured' as being an 'industrious' sort of a 'compilation'—may I not say that it was intended to point out the above truth? Of course I may have succeeded very imperfectly; and equally, of course, I am sure that many thinkers had already—and very likely through somewhat the same revelation of Sir Oliver's—held the same conviction, but, with the exception of permitting myself to quote from Sir Oliver Lodge's incomparable work, 'The Ether of Space,' in sufficiently liberal extracts to fully present his views to those who had not read the book itself, I did not intend it to be any 'compilation.' And in reply to 'LIGHT'S' kindly allusion to my work as that of 'a writer and compiler,' may I add that I have no more claim to the title of 'compiler' than I have to that of a translator?—I never compiled a work in my life.

It is quite true that there are somewhat liberal quotations in the 'Life Transfigured,' for, from the very nature of the subject, these various citations seemed to me valuable. So many able writers have discussed these themes that it seems to me the best presentation of any special idea should always, so far as possible, be given, with due credit to its author, rather than what might be a far less satisfactory presentation of one's own. But may I not claim to be right in the plea that *quoting* passages, here and there, in one's own text, to illustrate certain

points, is quite a different affair from 'compiling' a book, which term seems to me to entirely bar out any introduction of one's own writing?

And yet—may I beg space for one word more?—when one says 'one's own' in the sense of literary work, does one not always deprecate the phrase? Truth is yours, it is mine, it is our neighbour's; it finds its expression in a thousand ways and through myriad channels, and the only important point is that it shall find expression, no matter by whom. 'Not unto us, not unto us,' says Emerson.

For myself, when I first read 'The Ether of Space' I felt as if the entire mystery regarding the conditions under which man exists after withdrawal from the physical body were solved. The solution provided for all the difficulties. The solution was a purely scientific discovery—that of the nature of the ether—but how marvellously it exactly fitted into the quest for the next stage of our environment. Not since Marconi's discovery of the conditions that allow 'wireless' telegraphy have I been so thrilled and uplifted with a grateful recognition of the way in which the divine truth of life and of the nature of the universe was being revealed to man. It was to express my own recognition of the infinite value such a revelation of the nature and conditions of the ether was to our problems of the spiritual life that I wrote 'Life Transfigured,' with the effort to simply point out how the latest and most authoritative results of scientific research sustained and extended the spiritual hypothesis.

The Brunswick, Boston, U.S.A.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE MAHABHARATA.*

By MRS. ALICIA SIMPSON, M.R.A.S.

(Author of *Bhakti Marga*.)

(Continued from page 117.)

How can a man distinguish between friends and foes? 'This is a task,' says the philosopher, 'that even the learned deem a hard one, and for which keen intelligence is required, since friends at times appear as foes, and foes as friends. . . . But in truth neither foes exist, nor any friends. By force of circumstances men become friends or foes. . . . Self-interest is a mighty factor. . . . One should not trust at all him who is undeserving of trust, nor trust over-much even him who does deserve our confidence. . . . One becomes a foe for certain special reasons. Likewise, for other reasons, one becomes a friend. The whole creation is impelled by desire for some gain. . . . One is loved for his generosity, another for his pleasant speech, yet another for his piety. We are beloved in proportion to the interests we serve. . . . Thou consultest thine own interests, but the wise understand their own interests.'

The word 'mistrust' seems to echo painfully throughout the passages in the Mahabharata which speak of friendship, but if we recoil somewhat from the cold, unlovely doctrine of self-interest which the sages appear to preach, we should remember that the counsel on this head was given to Yudhishtira, a Hindu Emperor hemmed round with enemies, one whose high position laid him open to hostile machinations. We have but to glance casually down the pages of history to see that the philosopher's warning was not unneeded, especially in the classic annals of Greece and Rome. It was at the hands of Brutus, his dearest friend, that the mighty Cæsar fell. Augustus, his successor in the purple, raised Agrippa, a man of ignoble birth, to be his most trusted favourite, and bestowed on him his daughter Julia in marriage, for, as Maecenas told him, he was forced either to ally him thus to his side or to kill him. No other alternative could hold in check his greatness. Under Tiberius the Senate dedicated an altar to Friendship, in celebration of the Emperor's attachment to Sejanus, yet Sejanus conspired against his lord and was put to death. Numberless other instances could be quoted to show the dangers lurking round a throne. So the sage's counsel is necessary, at least for the great ones of the earth.

The Hindu philosophers held it expedient to make friends but prudent to mistrust them. With regard to this they taught also the futility of all earthly happiness. The familiar doctrine of self-mastery is here again enforced. 'Friends are not able to confer happiness, nor foes to bring misery. O son, do thou apply thyself to acquire that wealth which is imperishable and eternal. Do thou attain deeds of righteousness. . . . Hasten to achieve acts of virtue. For neither mother, nor son, nor kinsmen, nor beloved friends go with him that dies. To the abode of Yama one must pass alone. Only the acts, good or bad, performed in life can bear thee company to another world. . . . The path to the other world is beset by many foes. Then take heed to thine own acts, since naught but them will journey with thee along that road. . . . The mighty Yama uproots the friends and kinsmen of one's people. He is irresistible. Do thou, therefore, seek to gain righteousness.'

Ingratitude, 'more strong than traitors' arms,' is a heinous crime with the Hindus. Witness the fable in the Santi Parva of the robber Gautama, who, being hungry in the forest, slew and devoured a crane that had treated him with exceeding great hospitality, and provided him with fish. Rakshasas (demons) were sent out to destroy this unnatural monster, but Indra, in pity, revived the dead bird, whereupon with forgiving spirit it begged that Gautama also should be brought back to life. The great god granted this boon. Nevertheless, in an after life the robber was condemned to expiate his sin of ingratitude by dwelling many years in a place of fearful torture. The ruthless slaughter of the bird, and the subsequent vengeance on the perpetrator of the sacrilege remind us of the doom that overtook the crew in Coleridge's 'Ancient Mariner' in consequence of the wanton shooting of the albatross. The fable concludes with some wise saws and warnings concerning thanklessness:—

'The ungrateful never escape the results of their sinful acts. No man should harm a friend. All should be grateful, and strive to do their friends good service. . . . The wise man should treat his friends with the highest honour. No wretch is so vile as the injurer of his friend.'

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

As an illustration of the usefulness of Spiritualist Sunday services, the following quotation from a letter recently received by us from a North of England correspondent is interesting: 'While staying in Brighton during August, my wife and I attended several of the meetings at the Spiritual Mission there, and received such convincing and helpful statements from the addresses and clairvoyant descriptions that the following out of them has enhanced the value of life greatly. For fourteen years I have been a preacher on Nonconformist lines, but I find Spiritualism more in harmony with my inner convictions, as its truths solve the problems of life more reasonably.'

We command to Father Benson, Mr. Raupert, and all others who permit fear-thoughts to dominate their minds and who dread unseen evil agencies under the guidance of a supreme Satan, the claim made by Sir Oliver Lodge that 'the Christian idea of God certainly had involved and presumably always would involve an element of the miraculous, a flooding of human life with influences which lay outside it, a controlling of human destiny by higher and beneficent agencies—by evil agencies, too. But the Christian faith was that the good were the stronger.' That is the Spiritualist idea, too, but, apparently, Father Benson and Mr. Raupert are lacking in 'the Christian faith' that 'beneficent agencies' in the unseen are the stronger.

The 'Rothesay Chronicle' of March 3rd reports an interesting lecture on 'The Man Within,' delivered by Mr. James Coates to the new Rothesay Literary Guild. Mr. Coates told his hearers that on the sub-conscious plane they never forgot, and that whatever they came into contact with was bound to affect them throughout life. He cited cases of the operations of 'The Man Within' while under surgical operation and in dreamland. 'The lecture, which was illuminated with flashes of fanciful comment and wit, was followed by an interesting discussion.' The Indians say that the real man is 'the man who looks out of our eyes.'

The 'Glasgow Herald' of the 8th inst. gave a brief summary of an address on 'The Rationale of Apparitions,' delivered by Mr. C. Gale to the Glasgow Theosophical Society on the previous evening. The changed attitude of the public mind regarding apparitions Mr. Gale attributed to the splendid work

of the S.P.R., the Spiritualists, and the Theosophists, and he appealed for better treatment for ghosts. 'It should be recognised that although a spirit had left the physical body, it none the less continued to live. That it might be seen by a living person it was necessary either that the spirit must materialise a form, the observer must be raised above the physical level, or the living person must be mesmerised by the departed entity.' All this is good Spiritualism.

In Germany a new law is being proposed forbidding 'professional treatment of sick persons by faith-cure, charms, Spiritualism,' &c. During a discussion in the Committee of the Reichstag the Government specialist insisted 'that there was no such thing as animal magnetism' and that all 'mystic processes' were directly fraudulent. Of course, that is the 'official' view. The representative of the Economic Union declared that his own daughter was cured by an alleged 'quack' at Essen when all the doctors had given her up. The Committee refused to extend the suggested prohibition to treatment by 'magnetism.' It will be interesting to observe whether this proposal will become a law of the land, and, if so, what the faith-curers, Christian Scientists, Suggestionists and Spiritualists will do about it. Our German friends seem to have troublous times ahead. We hope they will fight for liberty—and win. It is evident that occultism is growing.

The Editor of the 'London Magazine' in the February issue says: 'We are no longer sceptical when we hear, perhaps, of somebody a long distance away realising in his inner consciousness some important event of which he has not received the slightest information by ordinary channels. In a word, our daily thoughts, whether good or evil, produce vibrations, which, unknown to ourselves, are bound to be received and rematerialised in the brains of other people, thus influencing human beings who are probably utter strangers to us and may be long distances away. Such, roughly, is the idea of occultism, and it explains the simultaneous thoughts which frequently inspire those in close spiritual relationship to one another, although they may be separated geographically by huge distances.' This may interest the Editor of 'Pearson's Magazine.'

Dr. A. F. Jackson, a young Cheshire man, has heroically given his life in an attempt to save some of the victims of the plague which is now ravaging Manchuria. According to a report in the 'Daily News' by its Pekin correspondent, the Viceroy of Manchuria, H. E. Hsi Liang, speaking at the funeral service, bore eloquent testimony to Dr. Jackson's fortitude, devotion, and self-sacrificing labour, and said: 'He was worn out by his efforts; the pest seized upon him, and took him from us long before his time. Our sorrow is beyond all measure; our grief too deep for words. O spirit of Dr. Jackson, we pray you intercede for the twenty millions of people in Manchuria, and ask the Lord of Heaven to take away this plague, so we may once more lay our heads in peace upon our pillows. In life you were brave; now you are a spirit. Noble spirit, who gave up your life for us, help us still, look down with sympathy upon us all.'

The 'Bristol Evening Times and Echo' recently devoted considerable space to an interesting report by its representative of an interview with Mrs. Powell Williams, of Manchester. The writer says that he gave a bulky pocket-book to the lady, who, while holding it in her hand, told him a number of things concerning his past life (which he admits were correct). Continuing, he says: 'Then she told the number of the members of his family; much concerning them; of the circumstances of the death of the head, even to diagnosing the cause; the demise of another relative by an unusual complaint; of an incident affecting the fortunes of the family which occurred thirty years past; exactly described another relative, whose presence was manifested in the room and who had "passed over" twelve years ago; and in a multitude of other ways showed conclusively a knowledge that could only have come from the extra sense of clairvoyance. These things may appear ordinary in cold print, but in actual experience to the person they concerned they were startling; for it was the first time he had met the lady, and there were no other means than the occult by which she could have gained the knowledge.'

The February number of 'The Hindu Spiritual Magazine' contains an account, furnished by Dr. J. M. Peebles and signed by himself and Mr. Robert Peebles Sudall, of a sitting with the Bangs sisters, at which the doctor obtained a remarkable picture of one of his spirit guides, under what seem to have been most careful test conditions. A reproduction of the portrait, which is evidently an excellent work of art, is given as a frontispiece to the magazine, and represents a patriarchal personage, with long white hair and flowing beard—a type not very unlike the doctor himself. All this is very satisfactory, but we must confess we are given pause by the statement that in

the corner of the canvas, after the work was completed, were added the words 'The Apostle John.' It may be due to a mistaken preconception on our part, but we have never thought of John as having features of a Western rather than an Eastern type, or as wearing what appears to be a modern black coat.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents, and sometimes publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views which may elicit discussion.

Clairvoyant Descriptions at Sunday Meetings.

SIR.—From practical experience, I know that the giving of clairvoyant descriptions from the platform has resulted in much good. I have in my mind now six prominent workers in our cause who became interested in Spiritualism as the result of attending Sunday meetings for clairvoyance. Our claims have to be tested. We have to bring the proof right home to the people, and the fact that the spirit friends can and do communicate to a clairvoyant is one that cannot be successfully disputed. After about fifteen years of platform work in many lands, I know that clairvoyance is a great help to our cause. And why not on Sunday? Is it not a free day and holiday? Have not workers then time to meet together and think a little of spiritual things? As for shocking certain people's 'finer' and religious feelings, some individuals need to be shocked many times before they commence to *think*, and it is as well for them that they are shocked.—Yours, &c.,

ALFRED VOUT PETERS.

Helsingfors, Finland.

SIR.—Being greatly interested in the various opinions expressed in 'LIGHT' of the 11th inst. regarding clairvoyant descriptions at Sunday services, and having had a little experience north of the Tweed, I would be glad if you would permit me to give my conclusions. Most of the writers seem to overlook the fact that we professing Spiritualists hold that Spiritualism is a religion, and ought to be the main foundation of every religion. If so, our meetings on Sunday ought to have for their first object the worship of God in prayer and praise, the philosophy and phenomena being only secondary. We ought never to forget that we meet together to give, and not merely for what we may get. We too often expect too much from incompetent mediums. Where is the one, I ask, who is competent to give an address lasting, say, for forty-five minutes, and then to give clairvoyant descriptions for another twenty minutes? Our experience is that it cannot be done satisfactorily; the clairvoyant descriptions suffer invariably, and strangers go away unconvinced and dissatisfied. Mediums there are who give any number of descriptions, but who have not the courage or want the confidence to follow up the descriptions, as they should do, by asking if they are recognised. Such recognitions are often convincing proof to strangers present who may not themselves have received a description.

Here in Edinburgh we have found it work very well to have both a speaker and a clairvoyant on our platform on Sundays. One of our office-bearers announces the hymns and usually gives a reading from the Bible, or an up-to-date book bearing on Spiritualism. The services are highly appreciated by our own members and by the many strangers who attend. If we are to be the means of giving comfort and consolation to bereaved and sorrowing ones, let us give the best clairvoyance we possibly can after the address—not vague prophesying or mere fortunetelling. As an inducement for strangers to join our society, we have a meeting, for members only, every Monday evening, for phenomena. This meeting has proved a great success, and during the past six months we have added to our roll of membership over thirty new members.—Yours, &c.,

Edinburgh.

JOHN DUNCAN.

Why do Spiritualists stay away from Sunday Meetings?

SIR.—Permit me to try to put the case of those who, while not unwilling to listen to a few clairvoyant descriptions at the Sunday services, certainly disapprove of almost all the time being devoted to them. To those who, like myself, are satisfied that clairvoyants see and describe spirit people, and who desire to listen to educational, inspiring, and helpful addresses, it is extremely disappointing to be compelled to sit and listen for an hour to descriptions which, however interesting to the recipients, cannot be understood or fully appreciated by others. To some among us Spiritualism is the religion of life, and we feel the need for spiritual services, for ethical and religious instruction and worship. Consequently, while we willingly sacrifice our own desires for the good of the stranger, we feel that some-

thing should also be done for the steady supporters, the members to whom the meetings are dear and sacred. Why is it that societies cannot, or do not, keep their members? Why is it that inquirers, when convinced of the truth of Spiritualism, do not join a society? Why cannot a congregation of steady adherents be built up and maintained? Where are the old supporters to whom Spiritualism was a vital faith? Can it be that while the visitor and the stranger are catered for, the members of the household are being neglected and driven elsewhere for the spiritual food that they cannot get at home?—Yours, &c.,

A MEMBER.

The Great Unseen.

SIR,—I am quite aware that in putting this paper before the public I am running the risk of being regarded as the teller of a 'fairy story'; but I am too old to fear criticism, and when I say that what I am about to relate took place more than twenty years ago, it cannot be thought that I have been hasty in giving an account of what I am to this day unable to understand except as a revelation of the Great Unseen.

At one time I had a profound disbelief in all visions, ghosts, &c., but now I know that there are mysteries in this wonderful world which we, with our poor, limited senses, are quite unable to comprehend.

Losing a good husband when I was comparatively young, I became, after what I may call a devout childhood, an unbeliever. My husband was ill about nine months, and during his illness I had prayed so earnestly that he might be spared that, when the end came, I ceased to believe in a merciful God. I had prayed, not as a Christian willing to accept the Father's will, but as a wayward child who pleaded for a dear one's life—the life of the father of my children—the life of the one who in all his thoughts and actions showed that Christ was his guide.

As a child I had 'seen God in every leaf,' had spent hours alone marvelling at the beauty and sweetness of flowers, had felt that this earth was a wonderful paradise and that God was indeed good to give so lavishly. When later I married the best man I knew—the man whose life was ruled by kindness and honour—I seemed to see many years of peace and happiness before me. Three children were born, and then, at first 'no bigger than a man's hand,' came the cloud of my husband's failing health, and nine months later he died.

I became an unbeliever; I refused to think of a God, shut my heart and mind to all hope of a hereafter, and became an atheist in the fullest and worst sense.

For ten years this continued, and then my eldest girl, who was fourteen, began to be ill with rheumatic fever, and one month later she died. As I stood by and watched her suffer I had no help from above. I could not point her to 'The Better Land,' for I had no faith.

Of the months that followed I cannot speak very fully. I passed through a mental inferno and often I felt I could not endure the misery of it, that I should have to end my life; but the thought of the trouble it would cause others stood in my way.

It was well that life at that time was somewhat hard; I painted for sale, and my occupation kept me from thinking very much during the day, but the nights and mornings were terrible.

Well, after many months of wretchedness, I had to go back to God or die. How I began to pray I do not know, but a measure of peace and resignation came by degrees. I say 'a measure,' for I still had times of doubt—bitter resentment and despondency—but I prayed more and more.

One evening, nearly three years after the death of my eldest girl, my daughter and I, after singing some hymns, went to bed at about half-past ten—our usual time. When we were in bed the hymns still ran in my mind. I asked my daughter to sing some of them softly with me. She did so, holding my hand, which lay near her. Some little time after we had ceased singing I heard a slight noise at my side of the room, and looking in the direction from which it seemed to proceed, I saw a light. It came from just where the skirting board joined the floor, at a side of the room where there was no window, no fireplace, no door. The light was rather yellow in colour and oblong in shape, about five inches high and three and a half wide. (This is as correct an idea of the size as I can give.)

For a second this light seemed to sway slightly from side to side as though freeing itself from some hold—then it became diffused and the whole room was lighted up.

I knew interiorly that it was a Divine manifestation, for all earthly troubles were swept away and I realised the peace that is not of this world. My daughter, still holding my hand, whispered 'What is it? What is it?' I did not answer, except by a hand pressure to enjoin silence. With that shining light had come the consciousness that this poor frail body might perish, but that the spirit could not be touched by this world's ills.

After illuminating all the room, the light gradually drew back to the place it came from and disappeared. My daughter still whispered several times, 'What was it?' but I did not speak, and presently we fell asleep.

The next morning, as soon as my daughter awoke, she asked, 'What was that light that came into the room last night?' I knew what she meant, but I wanted to learn what she had experienced and I said, 'What do you mean?' She replied, 'The light that came into the room last night. Oh, mother, when it was shining I felt that I could never be unhappy again—not even if I lost you, and you know you are all the world to me. I felt that I was safe with God.'

It is more than twenty years since we had this experience, and though we have often longed for another glimpse of heaven it has never come to either of us—neither that nor any other vision.

Reading and hearing so much of unbelief made me decide to give, as reverently as I could, this account of help from the source of all Light and Life.—Yours, &c.,

(MRS.) MARGARET DENT.

1, Clarence-avenue,

South Cliff, Bridlington.

[In the above deeply interesting and pathetic life-story the writer reveals personal feelings of a most intimate nature, and, while to some readers it may appear that the phenomenal manifestation was inadequate to produce the marked mental and spiritual change of attitude that she records, yet those who have passed through similar trials and revelations know that the outward and visible sign is accompanied by a spiritual influx which is at once a comfort and a benediction. This would apply equally well if the whole experience were subjective.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

Fraudulent Phenomena at Marseilles.

[Our Liège contemporary, 'Le Messager,' sends us the following letter in accordance with the wishes of Comte de Tromelin. We deeply regret that the Comte should have been deceived by a set of tricksters, and tender to him our heartfelt sympathy.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

SIR,—In 'LIGHT,' of February 25th, you quoted from 'Le Messager' some of the phenomena reported to have occurred in my villa, 'My Home.' I care too greatly for the honour of my name not to tell you that since that time I have discovered that serious frauds have been practised there, and that these involve about fifteen people. I have informed 'Le Messager' and the majority of my correspondents of this.

In all cases of fraud where the phenomena are performed by others who are present, the best checks avail nothing. Though the medium be tied, the doors and windows closed, the phenomena happen just the same, especially when the operators, so-called sceptics, demand control over the door and the light, in order to deceive more easily those honest individuals who trust in their honesty.

I think that Mlle. Pauline Bernard was a real medium, and that it was this fact which gave her the idea of committing fraud. I have reason to believe that she really had the power to move my large table, because I carefully checked her when no other persons were present.

I have excellent *procès-verbaux* reports of my séances, for the tricksters whom I have discovered dare not avow their fraud, but prefer to lie. I have, however, been able to find out that these unscrupulous persons laugh at our convictions and at psychic science. There are, further, a hundred unexpected motives which urge such people to mystify us, and especially to serve the interests of others who profit thereby. This affair has cost me a very large sum of money, which would be a matter of little moment were it not that henceforth I shall have an unconquerable distaste for all séances where I shall no longer be sure of the honesty of those who are present. To keep a check upon a medium is easy, but to keep a check upon all the sitters is a task which is beyond my powers.

Perhaps some day I shall publish the extraordinary story of this astonishing affair, for I have a manuscript account of this mediumistic romance in which all kinds of fraud were employed, such frauds as the classic works on psychic science never mention. Servants, for example, can play an important part even when they appear to take no notice of the séances which occur. Mediums may reiterate oaths—one of them swore on the dead body of his sister that his *apport* to my house by spirit agency was absolutely a fact. Such a thing is unheard of, but it did occur.

I finish this letter, perhaps already too long, on a subject which gives me pain, but I must do my duty as an honest man before all else, as I would not deceive anyone. Since fraud has been mingled with the phenomena at the villa 'My Home,' readers will have the right to suspect the whole of them, and it

will be best to erase from psychic literature what 'Le Messager' has published, and what you have reproduced; but I maintain the conclusions which I believe ought to be drawn from these facts, for if mine are false, there are others which are analogous and which have been as carefully checked and which have been regarded as probably true before being considered certain.—Yours, &c.,

CTE. DE TROMELIN.

Villa 'My Home,' Corniche, Marseilles.
March 4th, 1911.

'Don't Smoke'—Why?

SIR,—Having noticed that you invite questions from your readers, I would like your advice concerning an idea that presents itself to me occasionally in just two words, 'Don't smoke.' I have smoked for more than twenty years, and have not noticed any ill-effect, so do not see why I should cease doing so. I may say this idea generally comes when I am reading 'LIGHT' or any book which places mind or spirit before matter. I cannot call myself a Spiritualist. I admit that phenomena may happen, but I have never seen or heard anything to convince me of spirit agency. It is, perhaps, an unreasonable statement to make, but I feel perfectly convinced in my own mind that I, the I which controls, am spirit, and am immortal. As regards God, or a Supreme Being, frankly I do not know, but curiously enough for a long time now I have not worried about 'the dark and apparently cruel things in Nature.' As a Freethinker, I have taken myself to task over this, and asked, 'Why this changed point of view?'

But why should this imperative idea, 'Don't smoke,' persist in presenting itself to my mind?—Yours, &c.,

R. H.

Key-road, Clacton-on-Sea.

[Probably it is an impression from a spirit friend who is anxious on your behalf. We have met with many similar instances. Perhaps your habit of smoking sets up conditions which are uncongenial to that spirit, if it is not actually injurious to yourself.—ED. 'LIGHT'.]

Magnetic and Spiritual Healing.

SIR,—Twenty-six members of the 'Castle-street Hall' Spiritualist Society, Cardiff, have established a healing class, which meets on Saturday nights. Each member magnetises a piece of new flannel and every piece is given or sent to some ailing brother or sister.

At the commencement of every meeting each sitter gives a report respecting his, or her, piece, and I am pleased to say that in some cases there have been marked results. In order to help us, will some kind reader give or lend us some books on this subject for the use of the class? I am anxious that each sitter should 'read up' all the best authorities in order normally to develop for this grand and humane work.

Anything received shall be duly acknowledged in 'LIGHT.'—Yours, &c.,

W. R. MORGAN, Conductor.

69, Pontcanna-street, Cardiff.

Spiritualists' National Fund of Benevolence.

SIR,—I regret to have such a small total of donations during February to acknowledge, particularly in view of the fact that the expenditure has been very heavy during the past two months, and sincerely thank the undermentioned donors for their continued sympathy and support, viz.: 'A Friend,' Newark, 1s.; Mr. Burrows, 'La Junta,' 4s.; A member, Market Hall Society, Exeter, 1s.; Mr. G. Smith, 1s. 6d.; The Yorkshire Union of Spiritualists, £1; Miss E. L. Boswell-Stone, 2s. 6d.; Mr. Gainsley's circle, 1s. Total, £1 11s.

All donations will be thankfully received and acknowledged.
9, High-street, Doncaster.

A. E. BUTTON,

Hon. Sec.

MR. AND MRS. JOHN ADAMS'S GOLDEN WEDDING.

Henley Hall, Battersea, was the scene of an interesting and gratifying event on Saturday, March 11th, when Mr. and Mrs. John Adams celebrated their Golden Wedding. Heartiest congratulations were accorded to Mr. and Mrs. Adams and family by their many friends who thronged the hall. Mr. and Mrs. Adams, at the head of the table, with their sons and daughters around them, including, of course, Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Adams, were the picture of smiling happiness. After the banquet, Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn, congratulating Mr. and Mrs. Adams, expressed the wish, shared by all present, that they might enjoy many more years of perfect happiness together. Mr. D. J. Davis spoke of his long-acquaintance with Mr. and Mrs. Adams, of their work together, and of Mr. Adams's whole-hearted energy in every cause for the good of humanity. Mr. Wm. Bingham, J.P., after sincere and heartfelt congratulations, spoke highly of the merits of the happy couple. Mr. Adams, in response, thanked all for their

splendid tributes to himself and Mrs. Adams, not forgetting those who had so kindly assisted with the decorations and the attendance at the banquet; and ended by saying that the occasion could not be complete without a few words from Mrs. Boddington. Mrs. Boddington spoke of her association with Mr. Adams at Battersea, and of his good work for Spiritualism, the full extent of which no one could realise. Mr. Stebbens and Mr. Hough next offered congratulations; and lastly Mrs. Wesley Adams spoke in affectionate terms for the members of the family. Miss Dayton rendered Mendelssohn's 'Wedding March,' and little Miss Adams, Miss Ethel Brown, and Miss Hough sang two songs each with expression and sympathy. Two young workers from Burnley gave a humorous duet, and the enjoyable proceedings closed with dancing. Numerous letters and telegrams of congratulation from all parts of the country, Sweden, India, and even far-away Africa were received by Mr. and Mrs. Adams. That Mr. Adams is welcome back in Battersea was evident, and we all hope he will give us his co-operation in the near future as in the past.

H. WALLACE.

SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, MARCH 12th, &c.

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—*Cavendish Rooms*.—Mrs. Mary Davies delivered a deeply interesting address on 'Biblical Spiritualism,' followed by clairvoyant descriptions. Mr. W. T. Cooper presided.—*Percy Hall*.—6th, Mrs. Podmore gave successful clairvoyant descriptions to members and friends. Mr. Leigh Hunt presided. Sunday next, see advt.—D. N.

SPIRITUAL MISSION : 22, *Prince's-street*.—Mr. Ernest Beard spoke on subjects chosen by strangers present.—67, *George-street*.—Morning, Mr. G. R. Symons gave a spiritual address on 'Prayer.' On Wednesday, March 8th, Mr. Percy E. Beard gave spiritual messages. Sunday next, see advt.

HAMPSTEAD SUBURB.—**LADIES' LIBRARY, CLUB HOUSE**.—Miss A. V. Earle delivered an elevating address on 'Watch and Pray.' Sunday next, Mr. Macbeth Bain.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.—**ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK**.—Mr. Abbott spoke on 'The Truth about Hell.' Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn will give an address on 'A Modern Revelation.'

BRIXTON.—8, *MAYALL-ROAD*.—Messrs. Tayler Gwinn and G. Tilby gave addresses and Mr. and Mrs. Rush sang a duet. Sunday next, Mr. G. A. Davis. Weekly meetings as usual. 23rd, Social Gathering.—G. T. W.

CROYDON.—**ELMWOOD HALL, ELMWOOD-ROAD, BROAD-GREEN**.—Mrs. Wilson conducted the morning service. Mrs. Praed gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions in the evening. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Mr. H. Boddington.

PECKHAM.—**LAUSANNE HALL, LAUSANNE-ROAD**.—Mr. Horace Leaf gave an instructive address on 'The Origin of Religion' and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Miss V. Burton. 26th, Mr. Sarfas. Public circles on Thursdays at 8.15.

BRIGHTON.—**ROOM 'A,' ATHENÆUM HALL, NORTH-STREET**.—Mr. A. H. Sarfas gave good addresses and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., public circle; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Curry. Monday, at 8 p.m., clairvoyance. Thursday, at 8.15 p.m., public circle.—A. C.

BRIXTON.—73, *WILTSHIRE-ROAD*.—Mr. Weiss delivered an inspiring address on 'Liberty,' and afterwards, with others, gave clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Alfred Bridger will give an address, followed by clairvoyant descriptions. Wednesday, at 8.15, public service.—K. S.

BRIGHTON.—**MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM)**.—Mrs. M. H. Wallis gave excellent addresses, answers to questions, and good clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, Mr. J. Millott Lever, addresses on 'Character Building.' Tuesday at 8, and Wednesday at 3 p.m., Mrs. Clarke, clairvoyance. Thursday at 8, members' circle.—A. M. S.

HACKNEY.—240A, *AMHURST-ROAD*, N.—Nurse Graham gave an address and successful clairvoyant descriptions and messages to a crowded audience. On the 13th Miss Gibson gave psychometric delineations. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. H. Leaf, address and clairvoyance. Monday, 20th, at 8 p.m., Mrs. S. Fielder, clairvoyant descriptions. Tuesday, astrology class.

UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS invite all pioneers (past and present) to celebrate the anniversary of Modern Spiritualism by attending the last Propaganda Meeting at King's Hall, London-road, S.E. (near Elephant and Castle), on Sunday, the 26th, at 3 p.m. prompt. Spiritualists, whether active or passive, should make an effort to be present. Speakers: Mrs. Annie Boddington, Mr. D. J. Davis (deputy Mayor of West Ham), and others; clairvoyant descriptions by Mrs. Podmore; soloists, Mr. and Mrs. Alcock Rush. President, Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn. *Don't forget!*